

F&Y2 Wave 6: Executive summary

Results available: Results available

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Food and You 2 is a biannual 'Official Statistic' survey commissioned by the Food Standards Agency (FSA). The survey measures consumers' self-reported knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to food safety and other food issues amongst adults in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Fieldwork for Food and You 2: Wave 6 was conducted between 12 October 2022 and 10 January 2023. A total of 5,991 adults (aged 16 years or over) from 4,217 households across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland completed the 'push-to-web' survey (see Annex A for more information about the methodology).

The modules presented in this report include 'Food you can trust', 'Concerns about food', 'Food security', 'Eating at home', 'Food hypersensitivities' and 'Eating out and takeaways'.

Food you can trust

Confidence in food safety and authenticity

- 93% of respondents reported that they were confident that the food they buy is safe to eat.
- 87% of respondents were confident that the information on food labels is accurate.

Confidence in the food supply chain

- 76% of respondents reported that they had confidence in the food supply chain.
- respondents were more likely to report confidence in farmers (88%) and shops and supermarkets (85%) than in takeaways (62%), and food delivery services (45%).

Awareness, trust and confidence in the FSA

- 90% of respondents had heard of the FSA.

- 78% of respondents who had at least some knowledge of the FSA reported that they trusted the FSA to make sure 'food is safe and what it says it is.'
- 82% of respondents reported that they were confident that the FSA (or the government agency responsible for food safety) can be relied upon to protect the public from food-related risks (such as food poisoning or allergic reactions from food), 82% were confident that the FSA takes appropriate action if a food-related risk is identified and 79% were confident that the FSA is committed to communicating openly with the public about food-related risks.

Concerns about food

- 82% of respondents had no concerns about the food they eat, and 18% of respondents reported that they had a concern.
- respondents with a concern were asked to briefly explain what their concerns were about the food they eat. The most common concerns related to food safety and hygiene (32%) and food quality (23%).
- respondents were asked to indicate if they had concerns about several food-related issues, from a list of options. The most common concern was food prices (65%). Other common concerns were food waste (62%), the quality of food (61%), and the amount of food packaging (56%).

Food Security

- Across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, 75% of respondents were classified as food secure (61% high, 14% marginal and 25% of respondents were classified as food insecure (12% low, 12% very low).
- 80% of respondents reported that they had made a change to their eating habits for financial reasons in the previous 12 months.

Eating out and takeaways

- 43% of respondents reported checking the food hygiene rating of a business in the previous 12 months.
- 86% of respondents reported that they had heard of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS). Over half (55%) of respondents reported that they had heard of the FHRS and had at least a bit of knowledge about it.

Food allergies, intolerances and other hypersensitivities

- 12% of respondents reported that they had a food intolerance, 5% reported having a food allergy, and 1% reported having coeliac disease. Most respondents (78%) reported that they did not have a food hypersensitivity.
- 26% of respondents who had a food hypersensitivity had been diagnosed by an NHS or private medical practitioner and 5% had been diagnosed by an alternative or complementary therapist. However, most respondents (74%) had not received any diagnosis.
- 56% of respondents who had a food hypersensitivity reported that they had experienced a reaction in the previous 12 months and 39% reported that they had not experienced a reaction.
- 90% of respondents who go food shopping and take into consideration a person who has a food allergy or intolerance were confident the information provided on food labelling allows them to identify foods that will cause a bad or unpleasant physical reaction.

Eating at home

Cleaning

- 46% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands before eating.
- 33% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands, or use hand sanitising gel or wipes when eating outside of their home.
- 72% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands before preparing or cooking food.
- 91% of respondents reported that they always wash their hands immediately after handling raw meat, poultry, or fish.

Chilling

- 62% of respondents reported that their fridge temperature should be between 0 to 5 degrees Celsius.
- 61% of respondents who have a fridge reported that they monitored the temperature; either manually(49%) or via an internal temperature alarm (11%).

Cooking

- 89% of respondents reported that they never eat chicken or turkey when it is pink or has pink juices. However, 9% of respondents reported eating chicken or turkey at least occasionally when it is pink or has pink juices.

Avoiding cross-contamination

- 56% of respondents reported that they never wash raw chicken, however 40% of respondents reported that they do this at least occasionally.
- 76% of respondents reported that they always cook food until it is steaming hot and cooked all the way through.

Use-by dates

- 65% of respondents identified the use-by-date as the information which shows that food is no longer safe to eat.
- 64% of respondents reported that they always check use-by-dates before they cook or prepare food.